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THE GOLDEN JOY

THOMAS McDONAGH

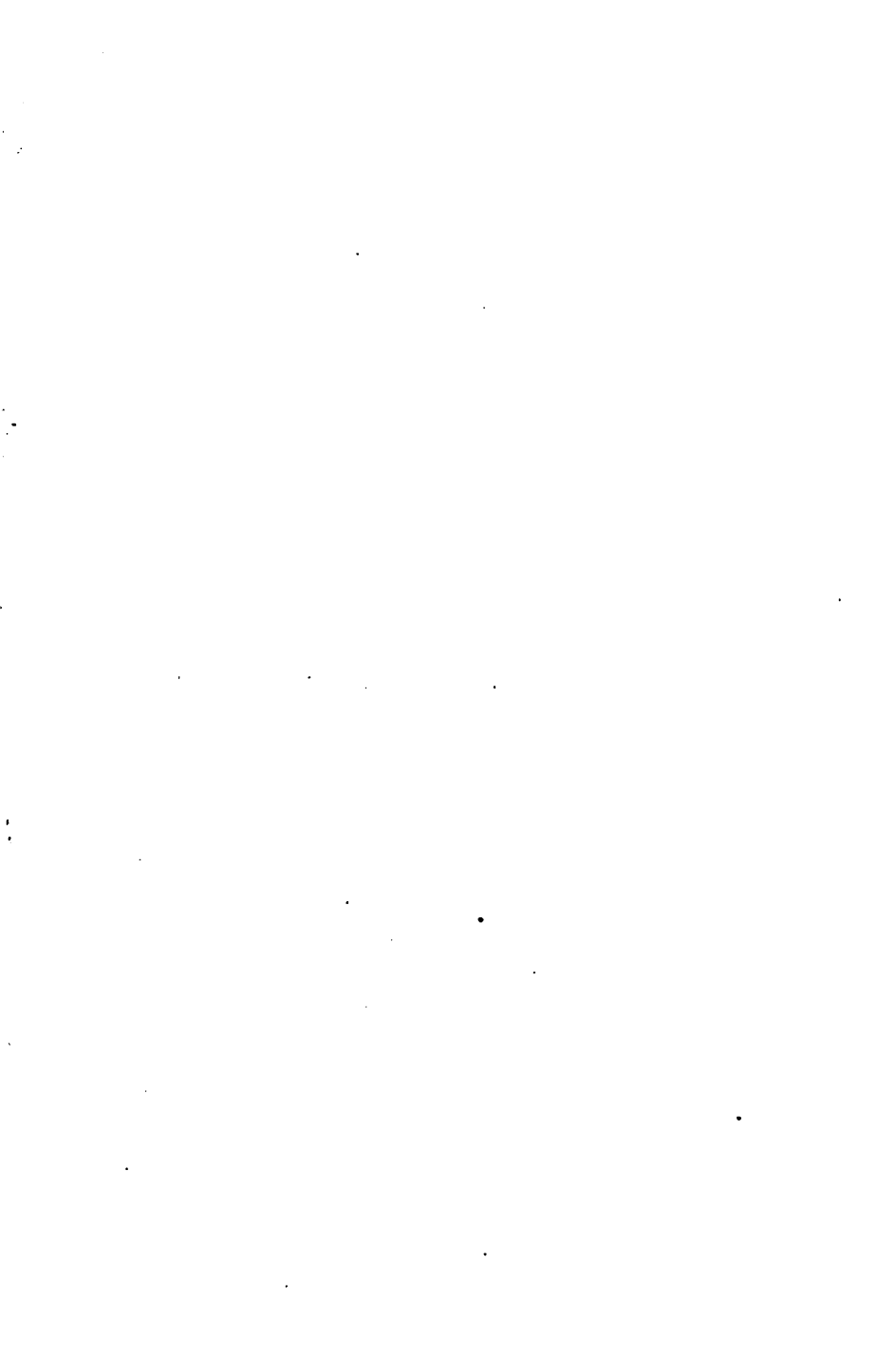
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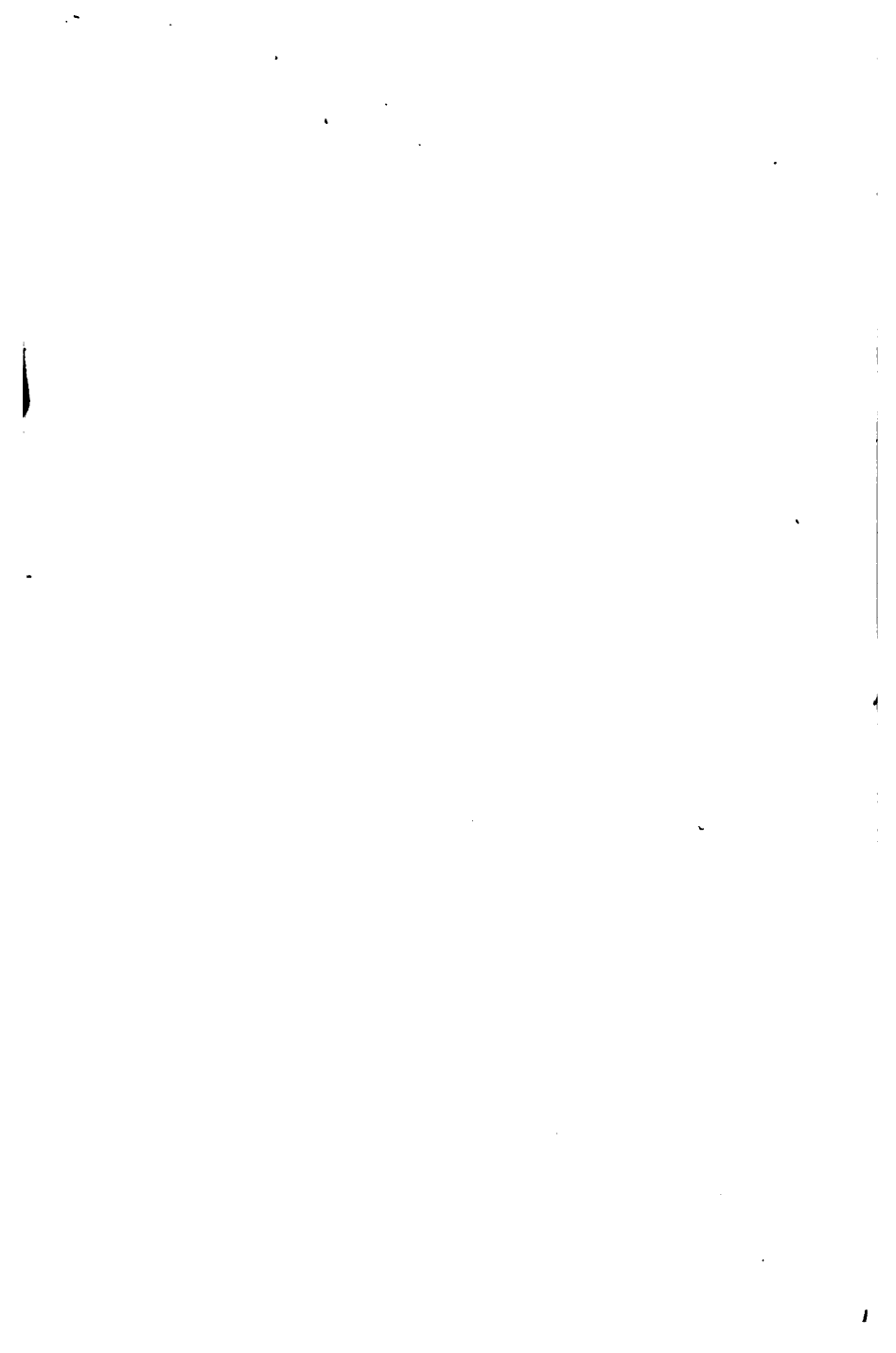
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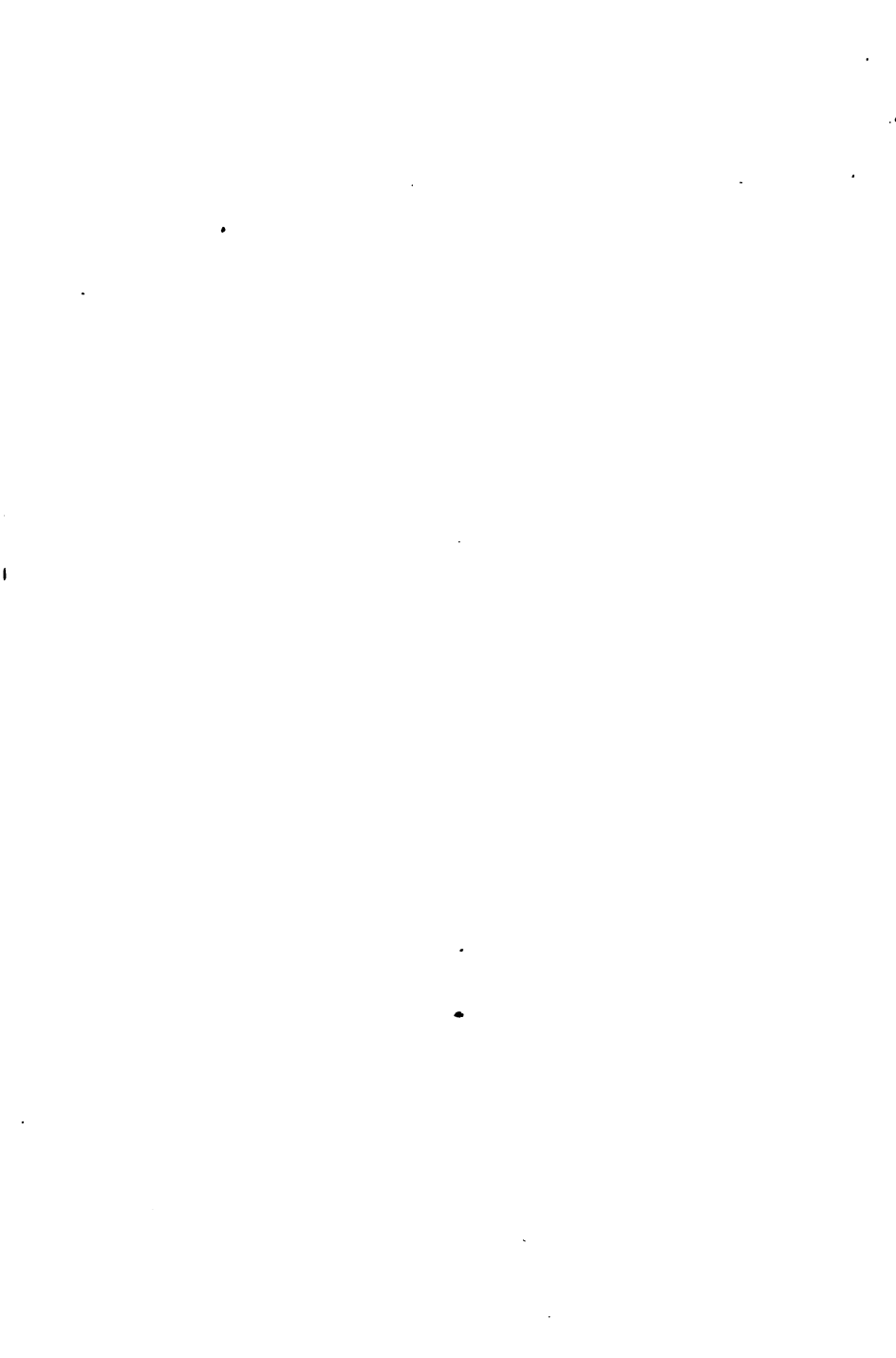
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THE GOLDEN JOY



THE GOLDEN JOY
By THOMAS McDONAGH

DUBLIN: O'DONOGHUE & CO.

M. H. GILL & SON, LTD.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
PROEM: THE GOLDEN JOY	1
THE PRAISES OF BEAUTY	
I. The Offering	15
II. Ballade of Beauty	16
III. Beauty and Life	18
IV. Of the Same	20
V. A Christmas Dream	21
VI. Ode to Beauty	25
VII. Rondeau of Beauty	29
VIII. The Tornata	30
In Country Calm	31
The Vision of Beauty, ...	38
The Faery Beauty of Ireland	40
THE QUEST	
I. The Quest	47
II. The Coming-In of Summer	48
III. May at Home	50
IV. A Fragment of Allegory	51
V. The Dainty	61
VI. The Great	62
VII. The War Legacy	64
VIII. Ireland, 1905	65

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
IX. For Victory	69
X. The Rose Tree	71
XI. The Poet Captain	72
XII. Joy the Flower	75
XIII. Change	76
XIV. A Fragment, I.	77
XV. A Fragment, II.	78
XVI. The Cloister	79
XVII. Dawn Joy	80
XVIII. Of Poems	81
XIX. To a Rebel Patriot	82
XX. To Saint Paul	83
XXI. To a Rebel Patriot Dead	84
ENVOI	85

When my first book appeared some friends of mine and some reviewers said that for all its ending of Trust and Faith the shadow of the middle gloom remained. I was then working on "The Praises of Beauty," and thought for a time to publish it at once—a sequel of Joy, as it were, to "Dream Tower." However, when already I had prepared the book for publication, I considered that it would be wise to wait a little. I have waited through three years of other work, and am now able to join to my book of Beauty another choice of poems which are, most of them, Praises of Joy. The common title my Proem explains.

THE GOLDEN JOY.

What hath the Poet but a glorious phrase
And the heart's wisdom?

Oh, a Joy of gold!

A Joy to mint and squander on the Kind,—
Pure gold coined current for eternity,
Giving dear wealth to men for a long age,
And after, lost to sight and touch of hands,
Leaving a memory that will bud and bloom
And blossom all into a lyric phrase—
The glorious phrase again on other lips,
The heritage of Joy, the heart again,
Wisdom anew that ages not but lives
To Sappho-sing the Poet else forgot.

O Joy, O sweet, sweet Joy of poet dream!
Who holdest the keys of Horn and Ivory,
Who joinest the hands of Earth and Faërie,
Thou art the inmate of the shrinking soul
That shuns the touch of every street-worn wind,
Sweet to all else,—that shuns the paltry jars
Of little, little earthly accidents;—
Thou art the spouse of the busy human mind
Which bravely, sanely, bears its worldly part
And apes not Folly strange or stranger Wit,
But, Nature's child, lives sweetly natural,

THE GOLDEN JOY.

Filling the duties of the tribe of Man,
Keeping the heart, O Joy ! untarnished still
And pinion-strong to soar the exalted way.

The Poet guards the philosophic soul,
That ne'er the poet-mind austere may mar
The rhythmic fall of sweetly tuned words
By aught of vain or vicious, cruel, proud—
Save proud with trust that's born of the heart's
truth—

By aught that lacks that perfect trust in man
And in High God. What though he sing of gloom
He is the world's best optimist at last :
His songs are Joy—the picture that needs gloom
To fill the light spaces, as Life fills Time
And Death fills Life and as just Hell fills Death—
Joy that sees Hell, yet in Death sees not woe.

O Joy ! the Spring is green—on many a wall
The roses straggle, on many a tree dew-laden ;
And now the waters murmur 'neath their banks,
And all the flocks are loud with firstling cries,
And in the heart of things Joy wakes anew
To live a long day ere the Winter falls ;
And now the thrush's note, and now the lark's,
And now a child's voice makes the morning glad ;
The kindling sky and the mist-wreathed earth
Have broken from the drowsihood of Night,—
Dawn widened grey, and now the orient blush

THE GOLDEN JOY.

Is over all the roses on the wall,
Over the drooping trees that wait the winds
To join them to the murmur of the day.

The Pilgrim Seer who journeyed silently
When all the ways were Winter, wild and wan,
Tarries to-day to sing the song of bliss,
To break into the golden lyric phrase
Of "Joy, Joy, Joy!—thou emblem, symbol, sign
Of all the Pilgrim-Poet's dream divine—
The Beatific Vision beautiful:—
Thou art the Angel of the Gate of Heaven!
Thou art the great Vice-Regent of the King!"

Then forward goes and will not brook Life's house,
Yearning to dwell far away, far away,
In the wide palace of Eternity,—
To fancy-fly beyond the birth and death
To the high Prophets in their sea of Calm
That broadens round this little island dún,—
To fly as fled from life he loved Oisín,
The peerless poet of the Fenian prime,—
To flee and be at rest—O sacred Word,
Dear holy Poetry of God's own heart!—
Yearning for wings to flee and be at rest!
Ah yet, in Joy's despite, his heart shall keep
Memorial futile melancholy thought
Of Life and some that never knew the gold;
So peradventure from that perfect bliss

THE GOLDEN JOY.

He gazing down will make Life's olden dream
A portion of his dream, a tear of Joy.

Here is a man bows down to toil with men,
To toil and strive and care for earthy cares :
The common Life that has her claim on all
Claims him and he the subject duty owns,
Yet keeps forever glowing in his heart
The fire eternal that will flame and shine
When the man lies compounded with the rest
Who never knew to look upon his light,
Whose light none saw, whose lives are all forgot.
One is Eternity to common man,
Twain to the poet soul ;—though his name die,
Though after fall of years many or few
His phrases wander out of Memory's fold,
His soul is twain, a heritage hath he,
His dreams are children-dreams and parent-dreams.

What hath the Poet but a glorious phrase
And the heart's wisdom? He hath nought to do
With April changes that your lives fulfil,
Sunshine and shadow. Him your blame and praise
Trouble in calm along the spirit's ways
That are with the great Change unchanging still,
With the great Silence where no voice is new
And no voice old—a train of prophet days.

What but the golden Joy, the golden Joy!—
The gift of Paradise and the clean heart

THE GOLDEN JOY.

And virtues all that Christ sang sweetly here—
(God was a Poet when He walked the earth)—
For though the lust o' the world have claimed from us
A few high called, the Joy is golden still
And will not tarnish touched by poet hands
That highly bear their trust in humbleness.

So would I rhythm and rime the glorious phrase
In this Spring lyric morning of my day.
When brown and green and nebulous silver lie
Quiet and happy 'neath the vernal pomp
Of that rich sky,—the trees a dome of song,
Song in the waters, in the sea-born wind,
And in the human soul the Cherub hymn
Of Joy which is the heart's philosophy.

Dear holy Hymn, yet wert thou sad to hear
Matched with the dream song of the Vision Tower*
That waked a boy to rapture long ago,
That raised a boy to Poet in an hour.
That the boy failed to mimic with his voice
But held heart-hid against his vocal day,
And sings here to thee, Joy, this lyric morn!
For first he sang out of a Book of Death
Before his day; and then with weaker voice
Chaunted the Resurrection, sang for Hope,
All in a Spring like this—before his day.

*The allusions in this passage are to pieces in "Through the Ivory Gate" and "April and May."

THE GOLDEN JOY.

Of Beauty now which is the heart of Hope
He sings, and of the Quest that may not cease
For that it goes to walk an endless road ;
But chiefly, and o'er all, and through the whole,
Sings the dream memory of those good days
When dawn and dark brought to the glowing mind
The vision that he sees now through the dusk
Leading him back to thy tranquility.

With mellowing balm and with nepenthe strange,
Dæmons of ease to slumber lull the sense
And hold it theirs : the spirit still is free,
A sister of the Saints, an elf of Joy,
And to the fair far vision of her life
Aspiring, goes now through the Ivory Gate
To seek within the very courts of Heaven
Her Tower of Dream, her soul-built citadel—
O Joy ! to bow before the Source of all !
There like the lark perched on his crystal dome
To sing, and stay awhile, and gaze clear-eyed
Upon the holy mount where Sion stands,
Within the gates the Lord doth call His own ;—
To stay awhile and hear the organ bliss
And one dear Canticle of Purity ;—
Then like the lark to struggle ere the fall,
Ere the sheer fall down down to the sad earth,
Where all our dreams are Folly to the wise—
Folly of Joy, the Folly of the Cross—
Down to the gloom of plaintive violins

THE GOLDEN JOY.

Whose fitful strains will sob such merry tunes
As there would win the Seraphim to tears.
But these are Joy to men—and what of woe
To other creatures far in other spheres!—
The Poet is for man, though Fancy soar
And bear him hence, his duty is Man's Joy,—
Knowing the glooms of Life and the dark nights,
Sure of the dawns and the white Summer days,—
Singing in twilight and the fate of Job
One golden Dawn and one enduring Wealth,—
Laying his wealth, the prophet-gift divine,
Upon the altar of a human Art.
Alas, some Poets have been surely damned!—
The yellow darnel flaunting 'mong the corn?—
Not so—good corn one day, blighted the next,—
Or like a well-tuned chord of one sweet harp
That stirs the souls of many musical
Who vibrate to the just poetic mood,
Well-tuned one day and the next all ajar.
Sure 'tis the singing of the peccant soul
That many great in many tongues have raised,
Heart-felt, brain-syllabled, and lip-let-loose,—
Sweet-sung to-day, to-morrow harsh and hissed.

I dreamt last night a dream o' the Unknown Land—
That, travelled far, I stood beside a sea
Whose pale waves crowding stared head over head
And mouthed warning inarticulate.
A whisper from no lips gave me their tale—

THE GOLDEN JOY.

Spirits of Poets they, high called and lost,
Thus missing half the Man's eternity
For gaining half the Poet's—Joy foregone.
And there by the drear waste of liquid Life
My feet were set upon a living shore
Wrought of the souls that never knew the Joy,
And never needed, never lost,—all dumb,
But at long rest while the waves beat and break.
These quiet loved I more than the restless foam,
And yet the human pity at my heart
Stirred, and would draw me to that passionate shame :
But that the Joy flamed and the glorious phrase
Burst out beyond me : —the waves wept to hear,
Wept for the exaltation once their own,
Wept for the gold they never more may spend
In mintage of the phrase upon the Kind,
Wept, wept to scatter from the spirit's tower
The joy-notes and the glory of this song.
I hastened far to spare them cruelty
Out through the Ivory Gate,—and then I knew
The dream was but a symbol of the true.

It is the Spring and these the songs of Spring,
Songs of the rathe rose and the lily's hope ;—
For now the Poet hears the lily-call
That came to Christ from Beauty's natural shrine.
And through His lips soared sacred out and up
Into the space beyond of Holiness—
The æther of the rapture of High God.

THE GOLDEN JOY.

Oh ! it steals to us like the breath of Dawn
That fills the pipes of Nature with sweet sounds,—
Steals low, and swells anon into a chaunt
To throb and triumph through the heart of Spring,
With the clear Canticle of Love that hails
The orient Epiphany of Joy.
And now the poet heart is calling too,
And called aloud by every voice divine
Behind our wall out through the lattices : —
Now is the season of the Golden Joy,
Now is the season of the birth of Love—
The perfect passion of the Heart of God,
The rapture of the Beauty of the world,
The rapture of Eternity of bliss !
For all our Winters pass and all rains go,
And all the flowers of Joy appear again,
And Spring is green with figs more beautiful,
And sweet with odours of the mystic Vine
That droops its branches over Heaven and Earth,
Scattering flowers and fruit and passionate wine
Down into all the places of the sun,
And into all the nether places dim,
Fragrant with ecstasy of Joy and Peace.
And who will steep his senses in the flowers,
And who will feed his spirit on the fruit,
And who will fill his veins with the great wine,
Shall see no Winters and shall feel no rains,
But Spring perpetual in the Land of God.

**THE
PRAISES OF BEAUTY**

To Father John Byrne

*Joy!—if the soul or aught immortal be,
How may this Beauty know Mortality?*

To some who have been struck by the sameness of these pieces I have said that for no other reason are they gathered together here, ringing the little changes of a single thought, forming in truth but one poem in parts. The thought is that Beauty dwells in the soul, living golden with Memory and Love, and untarnished still when the dross of the soul's informing is dissolved; thus my fancy has linked the Beauty of Trust and of Truth everlasting with the Beauty of Youth, which, though its object soon fades, endures in the recollection of the spirit. Beauty, indeed, is not of things visible, or of words or music or aught such, but of the soul, as many-formed as souls are many, relative; yet as in souls, however various, there are also the common natural relations, so there are common outlooks of Beauty, whereof the praises are told. Not that my utterings may be the expression of that which is so elusive, whose being is only in perfection; I would hope to fill in some hearts a want which they will feel, by bringing to them thoughts as old as Beauty's self, being eternal. But this is an after-hope; the poems were written with no such conscious aim—perhaps to fill that want in me.



L

TO MY FRIEND OF WHAT I WOULD
OFFER.

Antique and quaint in character olden,
Shapely with grace ineffable and tender,
Lily-like, wax-like, ivory and golden,
Exquisite, slender,—

Carven or limned, such images I'd bring thee,
Perfect and frail, most curious in Beauty;
Such were the careful numbers I would sing thee.
Worthy my duty.

II.

BALLADE OF BEAUTY.

Visions of Beauty have haunted our singing
Since the old birth of Time and Day—
Visions of Glory, a majesty bringing
From the empyrean, mingling with clay :
Lives come and go but the Glory will stay,
Far as a star, as fair to view,
Leading a few in its light who stray
To dwell with Beauty the only true.

Visions of Youth, a glamour flinging
Over a world of black and grey,
Pass with the small years, mournfully winging
Into a dream their flight away :
Others as glamouring-bright as they
Ever haunt on in the souls of a few,—
Haply but ghosts that at visions play,
To dwell with Beauty the only true.

BALLADE OF BEAUTY.

Beauty haunts on, to the spirit clinging,
Knowing no change of death or decay;
And e'en when the world hath heard the ringing
Of the trump that shall sound to Time's dismay
Still shall remain, immortal Fay,
Serving the Throne as Angels do,
That love while their homage of bliss they pay
To dwell with Beauty the only true.

ENVOI.

Prince of the friends of my boyhood gay,
Thou to thy visions must bid adieu—
Yet be it thine with the chosen for aye
To dwell with Beauty the only true!

III.

BEAUTY AND LIFE.

Who can say what Beauty is?

Who can tell what place is Beauty's home?—
He dwelleth everywhere I wis,
Of Life's old moaning tide the crowning foam.

Life is as a flaming shield

Of gold, with silver crusted at the edge;
Life is as a glowing field
Of golden grain, begirt with silver sedge.

Beauty is the other part

That lendeth unto Life all winsome grace;
Beauty is the throbbing heart
That sendeth all the rose-blush to the face.

Beauty is a white, white leaf,

Decked in midst with quaintly fashioned rime,
Of brain and heart a subtle thief,
Luring them far from dreams of Space and Time.

BEAUTY AND LIFE.

Who can say what Beauty is?—

The soul's best thought must be unuttered still—
Haply the Spirit's dreaming bliss,
Fringing with light a cloud of Life and Ill.

Where liveth Beauty?—Who can tell?

The soul doth see more things than mortal eye :
Haply therein doth Beauty dwell,
Glamouring thence all things without that lie.

Life is as a rose-tree green,

Perfect but in Summer's odorous glow ;
Beauty crowneth her a queen
With the fairest flower he can bestow.

Life is as a simple air,

Old and often sung—now sung again :
Beauty is a singer rare,
Adding new delight unto the strain.

Who can say what Beauty is?

Who can tell what place is Beauty's home?—
He dwelleth everywhere I wis,
Of Life's wild sea he is the crowning foam.

IV

OF THE SAME.

Fragment of a mighty plan
Is the little Life of Man :
Beauty alone doth make it whole,
Beauty alone doth help the soul
To labour o'er the narrow span
Lying 'twixt the seas that roll
Darkly, forward and behind :
Beauty the mortal sense doth bind
Ever to the Eternal Mind.

V.

A CHRISTMAS DREAM.

THE ALLEGORY OF THE LEAF.

I.

With joy I followed where the Spirit led,—
The Sybil-Phantom that had beckoned me
Forth from the night,—the Gate of Ivory
Dazzled again, its portals open spread,
And bright within the land of Faërie;
I passed it through in glee,
Swift as a leaf, swift as this thin Leaf dead
That still would seek the spirit of his tree:
“Fond fool, light Leaf, I house thee from the
cold,
Thou knowest how sharp it was to me and thee;
Thou too hast sung a lay uncomförtéd,
Telling how all the dross of Life behold,
And fool their fancy false to think it gold.”

A CHRISTMAS DREAM.

II.

There pass I in, clasping above my heart
The Spirit-Leaf, who, blanched from Autumn
glows,
Sighs still that his own ruddy brother grows
'Mid vanity : to him he would impart
The sorrow of his dream, he would disclose
The secret that he knows—
“Fond fool,” I whisper, “happier than thou art
Is he who lives forgetful of his woes,
Who feels his life and 'gainst the wind is bold,
Nor like a big-eyed coward shrieking goes
To hide 'mong dying grass, or drowning dart
Down a quick river, to the ocean rolled,—
To whom all Life is truth and dross is gold.”

III.

“Ay me!” the faint Leaf falters, “such my dream,
My dream of folly, folly, in the May,
When lurking showers pattered upon me gay
And washed to glory all the yellow gleam
That loved with light and gold and green to play
On bole and bough and spray;—
And after Summer, Autumn's quiet beam,
And then one brother died—ah, well-a-way!
My heart beat heavy, and my soul grew old—
Old as an age within a little day,
For Grief more thievish is than Time I deem;—
And then the belfries of the Winter tolled
Their maddening chimes, and dross was all our
gold.

A CHRISTMAS DREAM.

IV.

"The heart will learn to bear a bitter grief
While Life is Life, the small soul selfish grown,
And latest of his fellows left alone
Will hope for wondrous things with vain belief :
My soul sang out and stifled sigh and moan—
 ' Oh ! when the storms have blown
The Spring will come with buds in tender sheaf,'—
 (And all my spell of hope o'er him was thrown,
 My withered brother)—' and the May will fold
Around us the soft clothing we have known
In dreams of joy when Calm lulled storm and
 leaf'!—
He dreameth yet, while Death's priest, sable-
stoled,
Laugheth at him dreaming that dross is gold.

V.

"In dreams of Life to last for evermore
Cradled, 'mid holy calm of Christmas night,
My withered heart beat high in Pain's despite :
Bravely I buffeted the breeze that bore
The bells' glad tolling o'er a waste of white;—
 Then clung with fearful might
And clave close to the bough, for quick the roar
Of myriad hurricanes hurried in affright
Up from the sea,—but ah ! my passionate hold
Was strained and torn away, and in mad flight
Over the snow they bore me weeping sore."—
 " Poor Leaf, in thee is Beauty's tale inscrolled—
 *Death takes the dross, but Memory keeps the
 gold.*"

A CHRISTMAS DREAM.

VI.

Within the Ivory Gate thus once again
My spirit revelled in the thoughts that spring
Through dreams from out of Nature's sorrowing;
And caught a joy beyond the vision's ken,
Far fairer than the Spirit's triumphing,
Sweeter than strains that sing
The praise of Liberty and Faith of men,
And Goodness, and blind Trust, and Hope, which
bring
The soul to rest—fragments of Beauty's
mould:—
O, God is Beauty, and created thing
Yet never was but beautiful, save when
Too soon is claimed the dross whose day is sold
To tainting Death, deathless is Beauty's gold!

VI.

ODE TO BEAUTY.

O Beauty, perfect Child of Light!—
Beauty, O radiant Spirit of Delight!—
White and pranked with gold like the gold of the
 night,
The gold of the stars in quiet weather—
White and shapely and pure,
Like the lily-flower from stain secure,
With life and virginity dying together!

One Lily there is I know
That liveth for ever, unstained, immortal, a mystic
 Flower;
All perfectly wrought its frame,
Gold bedecked and eternal white—
White, more white than cold o' the snow;—
For never, never, near it came,
Never shall come till the end of all,
Hurtful thing in wind or shower,
Worm or stain or blight;

ODE TO BEAUTY.

But ever, ever, gently fall
The dews elysian of years that flow
Where Beauty doth endure,
In flawless comeliness mature,
Golden and white and pure,
In the fair far-shining glow
Of eternal and holy Light.

Beauty of earthly things
Wrought of God with hands of men—
Beauty of Nature and Art,
Fashioned for beggars and fashioned for kings.
For the yearning soul and the aching heart
And the wistful eye and the craving ear,
Beauty of dulcet symphonies low and clear -
Beauty of Beauties that fill the ken
Till the soul is stifled, faints with delight --
Beauty of human form and voice,
Of liquid eyes and blushes and lips,
Of golden hair and brow of white—
Human Beauty, that whoso sips
Doth die to a spirit free and rejoice,
Living with God and living with men,
Rapt rejoice in eternal bliss,
Raising his face to meet the kiss
Of the Beauty seraphic that he doth love,
By men and mortals all unseen
Save him alone the earth between
And the Being of Beauty above.

ODE TO BEAUTY.

O Beauty of beautiful Thought
That in poet's brain is wrought,
Uttered in tender lay,
Singing the heart from earth away,
Cunning the soul from care to lure,—
From stain and death a mystic lily secure,
Till the end of all to stay!—
O shapely Flower that must for aye endure,
O Voice of God that every heart must hear,
O Hymn of purest souls that dost unsphere
The ravished soul that lists, O white white Gem,
O Rose that dost the senses drown in bliss!—
Nothing can stay, nothing can stem,—
Nothing can lure the heart to miss
Thy love and joy and rapture and madness divine,—
O Beauty, Beauty, ever thine
The soul, the heart, the brain,—
How I would hymn thy loud perpetual strain—
Shriller and sweeter than song of Wine,
Than lay of Sorrow or love or War!—
Beauty of heaven and sun and day,
Beauty of water and frost and star,
Beauty of dusk-tide, narrowing, grey
Beauty of silver light,
Beauty of purple night,
Beauty of solemn breath,
Beauty of closed eye, and Sleep, and Death . . .

ODE TO BEAUTY.

Beauty of dawn and dew,
Beauty of morning Peace
Ever ancient and ever new,
Ever renewed till Waking cease
Or Sleep forever, when loud the Angel's word
Through all the world is heard . . .
Beauty of brute and bird,
Beauty of earthly creatures
Whose hearts by the hand of God are stirred . . .
Beauty of spirit, Beauty of soul,
Beauty informing forms and features,
Fair and white to the inward eye,
Beauty that cannot fade or die
Till eternal atoms to ruin roll !

Beauty of blinded Trust,
Led by the hand of God
To a Heaven where Cherub hath never trod . . .
Naked Beauty of Truth
Lighting the way of the Just . . .
Splendid Beauty of Youth,
Staying when Youth is fled,
Living when Life is dead,
Burning in funeral dust.

The glory of form doth pale and pall,
Beauty endures to the end of all.

VII.

RONDEAU OF BEAUTY.

When Youth is dead and Beauty seems a-dying,
And thou, wet cheek on hand, art sadly sighing,
Will no one whisper, "Dearest, why regret
Thy buried Youth—for Beauty liveth yet;
And liveth ever, Time and Death defying?"

Haply, in melancholy mood replying,—
"Ah!" thou wilt say, "the Light of Life is hying
To the same grave—ah! Beauty's Sun doth set,
When Youth is dead."

Not so, my heart, though Life and Time be flying,
Though loss with loss through all our day be vying
To taunt the soul against her bars to fret,
The olden bliss she never may forget,—
And Beauty lives, the sway of Death denying,
When Youth is dead.

VIII.

THE TORNATA AS IT WERE.

Thee, Booklet, unto him I send
 Within whose heart begins to grow
 The seedling plant of all our woe,
Who, fond to trust, yet mourns the end
Of fair things that Love doth commend,
 And seeketh One, Joy's way to shew,—
 Thee.

To such thy Faith of Beauty lend
 Whenas it seemeth hard to know,
 More hard sans hope deathward to go,
That he may have a gladsome Friend,—
 Thee.

IN COUNTRY CALM.

A POEM OF A MOOD.

I.

'Mid lilac blooms one leafy day, alone,
With odour of roses hanging in the air,
With wine and earliest fruit, far hid from care,
Were it not sweet to lie, to die, alone,
With never one to sigh, to cry, to moan?
Even Life were sweet, even Life, with none to share
Its fragrant beauty—secret and unknown!

II.

No shrilling bird to kill the limpid Calm
With nervous jagged singing, no fool bee
To drown with round drone the monotony
Of sabbath Peace,—which, holy as a psalm,
Down-dropping falls on aching Thought in balm,—
Rich with the reverence of high Ecstasy
And dreams of David's land of vine and palm.

IN COUNTRY CALM.

III.

David is dead long time, and poets here
 Sell their rich souls upon more sordid marts;
 And as a grape is crushed, all human hearts
Are trampled of the Beauty they held dear,—
Their Wine short quaffed, and Memory but a tear
 Dried by new Passion ere another starts—
Dream not of David, thou, in human fear.

IV.

All souls are lost in the vain world of noise;
 All gifts of God are bartered still for pelf;
 Ah! that an angel soul should change itself
To serve a brutish monster which destroys
The sacred spirit's mortal equipoise,
 Eternal Thought!—change to an evil elf
Who for Life's lust would traffic cherub joys!

V.

Here, in a Summer of sweet Solitude,
 Oblivion lives gentlier than Thought,
 Which pains the wildered spirit all distraught,
Hissing harsh names of disillusions rude—
Unsympathy of men, Ingratitude,
 And Gain, for loss of noble kin dear-bought—
Here 'mid the rose let Envy not intrude.

IN COUNTRY CALM.

VI.

The pious time of fretful Quietness
Is panting with the happy heart of Noon;
And Life, with one alive, were yet a boon,
If, lulled in slumber mute, this Happiness
By night or day knew everlastingness,
If 'twere not hurt by dread of waking soon,—
Something endured amid the world to bless—

VII.

Song, by enraptured Beauty waked and stirred,
Filling the heart and brain with all delight,
Killing the soul with joy to live aright,
Stronger than Thought doled out in sound and word,
And better than all noise of pipe or bird—
The spirit's own high winging in great light—
The spirit's own clear singing, spirit-heard,—

VIII.

Song of mute melody fits Rest at last
In windless quiet of broad leaves and flowers,
With odour of roses staying the lagged hours,
'Mid blooms and glooms and shadows tender-cast,
That fall in manna-peace upon the Past,—
Far from the surge of seething ocean showers,
In middle calm of country, earth-bound fast.

IN COUNTRY CALM.

IX.

In the beginning Calm o'er all things lay,—
Clung round Eternity as Light on Space,
Setting a glory unto Beauty's face,
Lulling the primal Time to drowse and stay :
When we are hence she shall resume her sway
And rule with other Time in every place,—
When echoes of old Life have sobbed away.

X.

Here was a Druid's house of noise and spell
In the forgotten Yesterday of Now,—
The glade cried out with sacrifice and vow,
Till on their gods long Death oblivious fell,
And with that far Dawn rang the cloister bell,
Calling lone hermits at the shrine to bow :—
The forest stands above their dark-built cell.

XI.

Grim, giant, blind, man's tyrant-god, Desire,
Doth tear down columned Peace with Samson
arms,—
The forest falls; the eternal mountain swarms;
Nor sea nor plain, untrodden, chill, can tire,
Nor air's sheer depths nor ocean's; we aspire,
We startle not at Hell's most drear alarms,
In hate with Peace, in love with Strife and Ire.

IN COUNTRY CALM.

XII.

The Tide with hideous whirl and wash and foam
Breaks over all, and all with tumult fills;
But anon ebbs, backwards its billow spills:
Horace! the fish are free; and earth and loam
Have claimed the ruins of thy little home,
Have claimed thy farm among the Sabine hills,
Alas! one day to claim thy tomb and Rome.

XIII.

Thus Death grins grisly through all human deed,
And happy Horace joined the Minstrel-King:
'As first when Eire heard the true bell ring
A voice pursues Oisín upon his steed—
"The Fenian might is broken like a reed!
The gods are dead long time!"—and everything
Shall die: in Life's bloom lurks the mortal seed.

XIV.

Drown then the hours deep in Oblivion's wave,
Or living shun they still Death's old regret:
Unconscious falls the rose, the mignonette
Buries its odour in a winter grave;
And no vain Love doth strive their joy to save,
No hearts throb slow and think ne'er to forget--
Only the voice of Life for tears doth crave.

IN COUNTRY CALM.

XV.

O Vanity too fair of human heart,
How dost thou mind thy Summer's withered bloom,
And Beauty, springing from her Mother's tomb!
How dost thou yearn for Manners that depart,
And Times with goodness holy, that will start
To no new being from their tarnished gloom!
How dost thou cherish Memory's secret smart!

XVI.

Drown Thought down deep, and Love linkt still
with Hate,
And all the Mockeries of mortal Life,—
Forever clinging and at endless strife,
Joined hand with hand, severed in soul and fate,—
Brief Rapture merged in Time disconsolate,
The mourning mother and the wailing wife,
True hearts despised, the false in regal state!

XVII.

Drown Thought—but ah! it will not die or swoon;
It is the worm that liveth for Hell's pain;
The smoke of torment stifling the quick brain,
With faces mocking as the winter moon
To a lost child, who hears the Banshee's croon
Shrill in the shimmer of the icy plain,
And knows her clammy hand will clasp him soon.

IN COUNTRY CALM.

XVIII.

Eternal is the Spirit of the Dead,
And waits at every place among the crowd
Where Life with noise and folly most is loud : —
Now she invades my solitude with Dread
And chilling Thought, all in my summer bed
Of flowers the fairest, curtained with a cloud
Of lilac bloom, in Quiet's mansion spread.

XIX.

Yet it were surely sweet alone to lie,
Thoughtless at noon of day, and take sweet ease
Among the charms that here the spirit please—
Alas! the Fancy flutters by and by,
And in a giddy flight bears the soul high
Above the sun-born shadows of the trees
To her eternal Winter of the sky.

* * * * *

XX.

But noon is far, the dusk more narrow grows;
And soon a star will hush the sparrows' din,
And fold them all the stooping eaves within;
A-cold will fall with drooping leaves the rose,
The lilac flowers will drink the dew and close;—
And silent hours will link anew and spin
The world and Thought round Seasons of Repose.

THE VISION OF BEAUTY.

Ah, the unhappy, the poor unhappy ones,
Who look this June upon the bloom o' the earth,
Upon the rare brown and the young green o' the
earth,
And wonder vaguely, the poor silent ones !

The changing tide of radiance in the sky
Is over them, and earth and earth around,
Here where no waters rock, no streets resound,—
Earth glory and the glory of the sky

Around, above,—but far, how far beyond !—
When soul is silent, Memory doth sleep,
The train of Beauty vain in vain doth sweep
Past the poor soul, the memory beyond.

They grasp that rose-bloom never in the hand,
Nor clasp yon sapphire in the casket choice
Of undulant words, or words of the straight voice,—
They, mute of lip and impotent of hand.

THE VISION OF BEAUTY.

Heaven and its raptures here are given to me!
But oh! I crave to see my Heaven's God—
I, slave of Art,—I, bowing to a rod,—
I pity them.—What if they pity me!

THE FAERY BEAUTY OF IRELAND.

I sing a song of faery
In harsh un-faery days
Yet wandering by the faery ways
In woods of Tipperary.

A cairn on the hill;
A magic fort below;
And whence the babbling waters flow
A well, enchanted still:

For here they reigned as gods,
De Danann powers of Light,
Quelling the demons of the Night,
Breaking their magic rods,—

Kind spirits of quaint grace
Loved by the heart of Lúgh,
Raised by his battle to subdue
And lord in olden place.

THE FAERY BEAUTY OF IRELAND.

They rule us all the while
In sceptic's wise despite
And sceptic sage unto their might
Subdue with human wile :

The pensive child they steal,
The cattle know their spell ;
Yet who so cold but loveth well
The magic they reveal ?

The ancient Beauty theirs
Of Eire's golden age
When hero-god in art all-sage
Reigned where grey Ruin stares,

Where Beauty lingereth yet,
Though but a haunting shade,
Making the loving souls afraid
That cannot quite forget.

Ah, gentle is their power—
'Tis but the foolish fear,—
To them the beautiful is dear
In soul and light and flower :

THE FAERY BEAUTY OF IRELAND.

They love the limpid spring
And moonlight-bathed field;
The dweller in their haunts they shield
With wand and flower-ring;

They love the poet heart
Dreaming in quickening rimes
The Beauty of the faery times
That never doth depart.

O Spirits heaven-born!
O yearning Peri souls!
Your music down our story rolls
And holds it near the morn.

O little people good,
Truth-tellers of the dew!
The face of Truth doth smile more true
Beneath your Beauty's hood;

And while the turf-sods glow
With faery-guided light,—
While through the land at noon of night
Your thronging thousands go,—

THE FAERY BEAUTY OF IRELAND.

Your power shall still be known,
Your Beauty worshipt aye;
Though hearts have lost their laughter
gay,
And Thought is sordid grown.

The ancient haunts are yours,
And mortals one or two
Will love you still and dream of you
While Beauty's day endures;

And tell your olden glory
To souls that Thought doth mar,
And roll your olden music far
Down Eire's fated story.

THE QUEST.

To Father Thomas Wilson

Cras ingens iterabimus aequor.

Horace.

I.

THE QUEST.

Who the flaxen lily limneth
Lily-true with dearest care?
Who doth win that Beauty hymneth,
Vying with the gods to share?

He doth win that misseth nearly
Godly song sincere to reach,
On false pipe to utter clearly
Gracious truth of Attic speech.

Fairest flowers of earth must perish,
Grace of Greece and Rome's renown---
Giving but a dream to cherish,
Tangled in a laurel crown.

I, that vision far pursuing,
Leave unlit the lamps of home,
On my Quest of Glory ruing
That I find not Greece or Rome.

THE COMING-IN OF SUMMER.

Yesterday a swallow,
 Cuckoo-song to-day,
 And the lark will follow
 In the flight of May,
 For Summer is a-coming in.

Corncrake's ancient sorrow
 Pains the evening hush,
 But the dawn to-morrow
 Gladdens with the thrush—
 And Summer is a-coming in.

Oh! laburnum yellow,
 Lilac and the rose,
 Chestnut shadow mellow
 In my garden-close,
 And Summer, Summer coming in!

THE COMING-IN OF SUMMER.

Lo, with shield and arrow,
 Burnisht helm and spear,
Flow'r and leaflet narrow
 Rank on rank appear,--
King Summer is a-coming in!

Summer, haste and hallow
 Something of the Spring
Which is harsh and callow
 Till thy Herald sing--
Oh! Summer is a-coming in!

III.

MAY AT HOME.

It is sweet o'er yawning waters wide to sweep,
Mocking through the deep the waves' pale stare,
But 'tis sweeter far by the quiet sea
In my own countree when the Spring falls fair.

It is sweet to hurry ever up and down
'Mid the waking town where Life goes light,
Ah! but sweeter far Life a quiet round
In a good dream drowned—and home, this night!

It is sweet from morning's tide till evening's ebb
Life to weave a web with gay tints new,—
But more dear to me with the old ones decked
Were the loom I wrecked, to the one woof true.

It was sweet to wander where young Folly ran
When my course began o'er Life's wild foam,
Ah! but sweeter now on the swallow's track
Flying, flying back to my old far home!

IV.

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

*I sat till midnight with a poet friend
Talking of Irish poets of to-day—
Hearing him introspect as poets use:
He boasted that from schools he stood apart;
He did not follow as the others did—
Though he esteemed their leader a great seer,
Worthy to be a leader,—but not his;
He knew none such, and followed but good sense,—
No dreamer of impossibilities,
No mystic mourner for the Druid days,
No singer of faery, gray, De Danann charms,
But true and conscious.—This they might have been;
And even yet they hearken to the voice
Of the true Muse—but fitfully, for now
They lie beneath a spell, under that mist. . . .*

*“And you,” I said, “are you beneath no spell?
Compact of inconsistencies, you boast
Good sense supreme, yet dream and sing of souls
Holding high converse far in other lives,
Which is of Poesie as are their dreams.*

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

*You vaunt your freedom, you, an Irish bard,
Keats is your god and your creed Wordsworth's
Ode!—*

*But Keats is Keltic, Blake and Shakspeare, all
That sing clear natural woodland notes; they turn
By godly instinct to the Gaelic mood:—
So sang I once myself in a Greek dream,—
'So sang—but was I conscious when I sang?'"
He, sighing, pitied me my poor defence,
And so he left me, smiling as I laughed.*

*But ere the morning, under the grey dawn,
(Was it a dream?) he came to my bedside
And told me a strange tale of wandering
Among the Irish poets in their "school";
How, thither led by spell, he heard them sing
Most piteous songs, and all were false but one—
That song dissolved the spell . . . he paused
on it . . .*

*Then strangely turned, and, feigning to forget
My presence, sleeping or awake, addressed
His idol poet in fantastic wise.
He who had cried for Truth and natural flowers
Sang now of mystic meetings in the stars;
Nor again marked me, so I tired and woke.*

*A fragment, half of truth and half of dream,
I hold my memory's portion of his tale.*

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

* * * * *

At length I trembling stand within a hall
Full of hushed sounds and night and quiet
breathing,
Where lie in shadow of the ebon wall
Dim shapes most quiet as 'neath funeral pall
Round whom their sleep a charnel-vault is wreathing.

I gaze in wonder through the shadows grey
As one new dead upon the other bourne,
And shape still shape beyond in sad array
Behold, and Terror doth my soul dismay
As thine in Hell by him who lives to mourn.*

Most like to that drear Hell this sleepful place;
But Mystery broodeth over all like night,
Lacking alone the hope of morning's grace;
And naught of knowledge toucheth any face,—
No memory of the ages' olden flight.

Whence? Whither?—Yet I feel upon my wrist
The elf clasp of the hands that lead me on
Through shades of gramarye where'er they list,—
With joy I feel, as one who through a mist
Hails the dry house whose far lamp long hath
shone.

* "Through the Ivory Gate"—*A Dream of Hell.*

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

I peer into the dusky daemon eyes
Which other-where I tremble to behold,
Asking their light to look 'neath that which lies
With Night and Sleep on all ; and he replies
With a high call that frights the Silence old :

" Speak, though you wake not, ye who slumber here,
Utter your wisdom ! " And a murmur thrills
Athwart the breathing as a sigh of fear,—
A shudder through the heart when one is near
Who late hath died, and all the spirit chills.

And one far off slowly speaks to the Dawn
That walks the place of breathing corpses now,
With voice clear as a bell across a lawn
What time it calls the neat-herd from his bawn
To noontide rest, the labourer from his plow :

*I made a wall of brass around my heart
Held fast within,
And proven chains of steel in every part,
To guard from sin :
In vain I forged and built my wall of brass,
The strong chains withered like a morning grass*

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

And "Vain, vain, vain, all vanity!" they sigh,
The mystic mortals, through the thinning light;
But one more loudly to my guide doth cry
Of Faërie,—the rest a-silent lie
To hear the dropping careful words aright:

*The wind that blows the asphodel to death
Hath woven round my heart a white shroud chill,—
And ah! that I should linger on Life's marge!
Welcome the wind that blows with faery breath
And leads me to the sea-ward old far hill,
Wafting from voiceful lands my spirit's barge.*

But I, grown bold beneath the wavering spell
Of mystic Darkness and of druid Doubt,
Fearing the wraith of that which I love well,
Fearing the mist that dulleth Song's true bell,
Unto the dreamers of dim things cry out:

"Whence are you, whence?—Or is your memory
dead?

Sure you were mortals late with joys and woes:
Have you no speech to truthful passion wed
Plaintive and grave,—sooth, though your joy be
fled,—
Songs of a human heart, an earth-born rose?"

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

And he who lies behind me murmurs low :

“ Ah, I remember yet one day, one hour,—
For I came hither but a while ago,
None hath come hither since—though farther flow
The things I held, and withers every flower.

“ I had a love who was the Flower of Time;
And I, unlucky, in her garden left her,—
I wandered forth to hear a mystic rime
With never a dread for her red rose's prime—
Ah me! the lily's spell of warmth bereft her.”

*Thirteen little weeks, love,
Since I saw the rose
Blooming on thy cheeks, love,
Where yon lily grows:*

*And its fallen leaves, love,
On thy lips were bright,
Where the violet grieves, love,
'Neath the lily's blight.*

* * * * *

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

The piteous lay of Truth, sung 'mid the gloom.

Hath burst asunder bonds of gramarye . . .
To thee I turn whose praise of Beauty's bloom
Doth fill my seventh line, who from thy tomb
Imperial callest Beauty's heart to thee.

I turn to thee who seest now more nigh
And Truth and Beauty in the face of God,
Which wildly thou didst know so far and high,
Which wildly thou didst mark with untaught eye.
To Truth I go in paths by Beauty trod.

And he, the poet of the wistful lays,
Is true apart, who singeth godly kind,
And true in all his wanderings by the ways
Of Faërie—which others but mispraise
By praise unmeet—a seër 'mong the blind.

His voice came to me from the West afar,
From thine own country, crooning Danann rimes,
Over the faery waters of Glencar
It came, singing the joys that nought may mar,
The Land where Nothing is, the larger times : —

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

*A lisping water in a lonely place
Whispered to me a song of brooding rest,
Known but to dreamers of the mystic race
That dwells out by the silence of the West.*

*"Here is the heart, the heart of Beauty's good!"
Murmured the water, laughing as it ran;
I caught the glory in a joyous mood
To gladden chosen of the tribe of Man.*

*The West has many lonely places dim
Where linger wondrous fragments of the past,
Linger at rest on the world's desolate rim
With ample times and spaces many and vast.*

*Men lived of old a godly life time-free,
'And dreamed wide dreams and hurried never at
all;
They brooded by the billows of the sea
To mark th' exultant in that swell and fall . . .*

*Or Time was like the ocean, uncontrolled,
Unbarriered, and such too was the Life—
He who dreams now the larger dreams of old
Becomes a fool amid the sordid strife.*

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

*But there where I am going to abide
The fool is wise, the sordid strives in vain,
Building up barriers 'gainst th' enduring Tide
That shall return and make the earth a plain.*

*Beauty and Calm accord a perfect bliss,
The heart, the heart of Beauty's good is rest,—
And I shall dream of rest, nor dream amiss
There by the lisp'ing waters of the West.*

I dreamt of them who fain would sing with him—
A fearsome dream of Death-in-Life, untrue,
Fraught with strange mystery and secrets dim :
He entered not within the dwelling grim
Where all with passion dark their sleeping rue.

Yet one therein hath not forgotten yet
The fair sweet accents of the Song of Truth,
And Poetry his lady doth regret,—
And there my spirit dreaming thou hast met,
Mourning the sleepers' plight with wondering ruth.

But thou art far in death, and never here
Shall I meet thee or speak thee living word,
Nor hear thine ever ; year on lonesome year
Shall draw away, and thou from thy young bier
Shalt come not though the waters all be stirred.

A FRAGMENT OF ALLEGORY.

Dream of me thou that I thy soul may greet
Over the wastes of Time, the seas of Space;
Beauty and Truth endure though ages fleet;
Spirits that dwell in stars apart shall meet,
And mortal eyes gaze on thy angel face.

*Dream of me, dream, for the old sake's sake
That thy spirit may dwell with mine,
Sharing the joys that flake on flake
Fall from skies no longer thine.*

*Gathered, they perish, they melt, alas!
Killed by Love's too eager breath,
Leaving mayhap but a tear as they pass,—
The grief of a soul for their little death.*

*Different spirits in different lives,
Memory, Memory, ever the same,
Dream of me, dream, no barrier rives
The linked wings of a ghostly flame.*

THE DAINTY.

The perfect lay
I dreamed a poem wrought
Of words that play
Around a dainty thought —

A tiny song
For Mab's elf music meet,
Eight linelets long
And forty vowel sweet.

VI.

THE GREAT.

The great have bodied past hereby...

Hark to the echoes throbbing still!

Hark to the voices chaunting high

Deeds for a while that shall not die!

Splendid they shone in purple and gold --

See where we caught the perfect gleam!--

Wrought it tapestry of old;—

The purple fades, but the gold is gold.

The great, they bore a soul in each—

A link-shell in the chain of souls:

Theirs were the jewels of Life's beach,

From gem to gem an age doth reach.

Heaven-lent, for Heaven they held their day,—

Though their vesture—e'en purple--marked
it not:

The earthlings pass too by this way—

Foregone, forgotten,—no gold, no ray!

THE GREAT.

The great hereby shall ever pace—

Be our great the great till the end of it;
Fall not our gold from its burnished place;
Be our voice not dumb to another race.

Hereby—or so then, not hereby;

Perchance not thus the great will go;
Perchance our Heaven they will decry;
Our jewels perchance—so not hereby.

VII.

THE WAR LEGACY.

Be it War like the War that we waged, like the wind
that withers the wold

All the howling night (and the people in horror
holy within the house)

Uprooting the stark strong trees and riving the ruins
of old,

Making tremble the animal—brute and man—the
king of men and the mouse.

For better War's battering breeze than the Peace that
barters the Past,

Better far the fear of our fathers' Father than
friendship false with their foe,

And better anointed Death than the Nation's
damnation at last,

And the crawling of craven limbs in life and the
curse of the coward below.

Let the forest be felled and the roof-tree riven by
wind of War,

Let mortals tremble and totter to death and the
fight fare on anew,

With a soul for prize, and the trust of the sword of
a Son for star,

And Victory and Heaven of Heroes for end, and
revenge for the lives of the true.

VIII.

IRELAND, 1905.

Thomas Davis loved his land,
Dreamt a dream, and dared to trust—
Sixty years ago his hand
Fell to useless dust.

Sixty dismal years, alas!
Fraught with death and wrong and scorn—
Memory from him doth pass
As he ne'er were born.

All the brave are o'er the sea,
All that were the fair and good!—
All the strong that would be free
Shun our Nationhood.

Huddle here the weakling few,
Murmur that 'twere good to die—
Let this race die, and a new
Erin glorify.

IRELAND, 1905.

Sure our fathers chose the wrong,
Ne'er content with foe to treat--
Down the losing ages long
Keens their shrill defeat.

Let the flag at last be furled
And the bootless quarrel cease,
With the Empire of the World
Let us stand in peace!—

Davis—ah! he loved this land,
And he dared in her to trust—
Sixty years his tongue and hand
Have been nerveless dust!

But the voice—it dies not yet,
And the spirit lives for aye,
And his race shall not forget,
May not pass away!

Down the ages of defeat
Sire to son a duty gives,
While a patriot heart doth beat
Still the Nation lives!

IRELAND, 1905.

We were we ere England rose,
England falls and still we are—
Saxon foes as Danish foes
Meteors to our star !

Easy 'twere in peace to dwell,
To give o'er the ancient fight,—
Easy the descent of Hell,
High are Heaven and Right !

England prays you now to take
At her feet an easy place—
Take it, slaves,—but nought can make
Saxons of your race.

You are Irish to the end !
Ease for this your sires withstood :
Down the glorious years they send
Life-long Nationhood.

Far the end and Life is long ;
For the spirit wakes anew,
And again are born the strong
Where the strong were few,—

IRELAND, 1905.

Strong and brave and many and young
Dwelling within Irish seas,
Speaking their proud Gaelic tongue,
Craving no new ease,

Keepers of their fathers' hest,
Lovers of their fathers' ways,
Guarding the sublime bequest
'Gainst the coming days—

Days of glory, days of peace,
Days that Davis yearned to see,
Hail! with you the wars shall cease,
Crowned with victory!

No defeat doth mar the past,
Not in vain our fathers fought,
If the strife goes well at last
For the Right they sought.

Thomas Davis in his grave
Sleeps, for all his dreams of trust,—
But his soul is with the brave
Though his heart is dust!

IX.

FOR VICTORY.

We thank Thee, God,
For the love Thou hast given us,
Though late, for the country of our fathers!—
Late, not over late,
We thank Thee through Patrick
That we serve the country of our fathers

We toil by day,
And we dream in the sleep-time,
And our toil and our dreams are for Erin:
We hold the flag
That our sires held always,
And we make new dreams for Erin.

O Victory
How fair thou comest,
Young, though the ages are thy garments!
Of Gaelic mouth
How sweet thou singest,—
How splendid in the beauty of thy garments!

FOR VICTORY.

All radiant thou
In grandeur of the Fenians,
Or crowned with the memory of Tara!
In the fame of kings,
In the might of chieftains,
Bound in the memory of Tara!

Sweet as May dream,
Sweet is our Gaelic—
How Erin shall teem with its glory!
Brave in the North
And melodious in Munster
And impetuous in Connacht its glory!

An old man weeps
And a young man sorrows,
While a child is busy with his gladness!
The old shall cheer
And the young shall battle,—
The child shall tremble for their gladness.

Sweet little child
To thee the victory—
Thou shalt be now as the Fenians!
For thee the feast,
For thee the lime-white mansions,
And the hounds on the hills of the Fenians!

X.

THE ROSE TREE.

The Rose and the Thorn,—
Life's ancient story,
Ever reborn,
Of Sorrow and Glory.

And the after-lot
That Time discloses,
The thorns forgot
In dreams of the roses.

XI.

THE POET CAPTAIN.

They called him their king, their leader of men, and
he led them well

For one bright year, and he vanquished their foe,
Breaking more battles than bards may tell,
Warring every day. Till the heart spake low
And said—"Is it thus? Do not these things pass?
What doth abide?

They are but the birds from the ocean, the waves of
the tide;

And thou art nought beside—grass and a form of
clay."

And said—"The Ligurian fought in his day,—
In vain, in vain! Rome rules." And he left his
friends to fight,

And their victory passed away,
And he, like a star that flames and falls in the night.

But after another year they came to him once again,
And said—"Lead us forth again. Come with us
again."

THE POET CAPTAIN.

The poet heart said still—"You strive against Fate,
alas!"

But they said—"Our race is old and we would not
have it pass;

Ere Rome began we are, a gentle people of old,
Unsavage when all were wild."

He sighed—"How Egypt was old in the days that
were old,

Yet hath passed quite away—we pass . . ."—
"But undefiled!"

He rose and went again, and they conquered again.

Till the same drear season stirred the poet heart
To murmur to the soul—"This is in vain! Of yore
Lo, Egypt was, and all things do depart,
This is in vain!" And he fought no more.

He conned the poems that poets had made in his
own land,

And he loved the Past for its failure—there he could
stand.

And he fought no more, dwelling in solitude,
Till they came and called him back to the multitude,
Saying—"Our language dies, our olden manners
die."

He went again and they raised his banner on high:
Came Victory, eagle-formed, with wings wide
flung—

THE POET CAPTAIN.

And with them a while he fought, with never a weary
thought, with never a sigh,
That their children might be as their fathers,
speaking their fathers' tongue.

But the poet heart whispered unto the patriot soul,
And said—"O little soul, striving to little goal!
Here is a finite world where all things change and
change."

And said—"In Mexico a people strange
Loved their manners and language long since when
the world was young:

Their language is silent long—what of it now?—
silent and dead!

Their manners forgotten, and all but their memory
sped!"

And murmured—"What reck's it? Heart will die
and tongue;

And when they live again they live in a place that
is nought,

With other language, other customs, different
thought."

He left them again to fight, and no more for him
they sought.

But they chose for leader a stern strong man
That looked not back o'er the waste of story:
For his country he fought in the battle's van,
And he won her peace and he won her glory.

XII.

JOY THE FLOWER.

O bursting bud of Joy
I pluck thee in thy flower !
Fast I plant thee in my breast
To bloom and bloom forever.

I lived without thee long,
Lonesome my life without thee—
Lightly blossom in my breast,
O Flower mine, forever !

XIII.

CHANGE.

"'Tis but the little things of Life that run
From change to change, the great things never bend
In their high course: the winds wage without end
A war of mutability, un-won,
Un-lost, little,—a civil strife; the Sun
Alters not, stays not, wars not, doth not lend
A pulse-beat of his dateless life to tend
What loom soever, though Troy's fate be spun

By gods thereon."— So spake the Thought of Man.
And straight One answered—"Change is but a line
Drawn in thy sight of the eternal Plan:
Change is the world's part of the Law divine,—
Itself unchanged, though small and great began,
Though they shall end and the Sun cease to shine."

XIV.

A FRAGMENT.

*(Written of a Patriot who suffered unmerited
disgrace and death).*

I.

Within the surging Sonnet must I tame
The struggling waters of a vast conceit,
Which was a hill-born torrent rushing fleet
To ruin ruining, and never came
Widened to sea; but stopt in cramp-up shame,
Sudden, straight-dammed with sordid stocks unmeet,
Stagnant in death, to prove the soul's defeat
And mirror but the vanity of Fame.

So was his great life broken in its way . . .
Or like a martyr's mighty heart,—to turn,
Flaming, a moment hence, to ashes grey,
And lie forgot within an earthen urn . . .
Or like the noontide passion that doth burn
In death of Joy, and Joy, and Joy's delay.

XV.

A F R A G M E N T .

II.

As one who stands abashed when on his sight
A fragment of Antiquity doth burst
And body huge above the plain which erst
Knew its high fame and all its olden might;
So with one Sabbath dawn in visioned light
I gazed on him, a fragment from the first,
A ruin vast, half builded here and curst,—
Perchance full moulded in the eternal Night.

How may I sing him?—How his story plan
Who was created for the silent eye
And thence heart, soul, forever?—May he fill
So frail a verse,—or break it?—Will men cry
Shame that I dwarf the sequel and the man
To house him thus within a fragment still?

XVI.

THE CLOISTER.

Four voices chaunting in the ancient mode
A song that Dante's raptured heart hath drunk—
Music a thousand years ago that flowed
Clear from the chastened heart of some old monk!

And, as the very speech of Truth sincere,
The gracious Latin words that Dante knew,
Telling a tale of Godly Hope and Fear,
And Faith enduring darker ages through.

How blest were they who hymned that praise of God
In Darkness glorious, leaving earthly lore!
How blest who follow in the way they trod,
And chaunt the songs they chaunted first of yore!

O dear Dark Time of Miracle, thy Night
Than all this garish Noontide is more bright!

XVII.

DAWN - JOY.

When the first orient cloud hath taken flame
And fair on Nature's cheek a blush doth burn,
Where with her morning throng the noble Dame
From distant lands doth greet her Lord's return.

Then doth a quiet soul sing to High God
And soar in pious rapture to the skies,
Ecstatic-borne, as from yon earthy sod
The seraph-lark doth take all Paradise.

The veils of Night are up-drawn fold by fold,
And the dear animals of God are there,
And plain and hill a thousand ages old,
And I of yesterday, that high Dame's heir.

Lord, in Thy Dawn and Dark grant me to see
Thy Joy, the minstrel of Thy Joy to be!

XVIII.

OF POEMS.

Fragrant and fresh and sparkling all with dew,
Delicate daintily, dew crystal clear,
The dew of April, or the tremulous tear
That veils, not dimming, a dear eye of blue,—
Winsome and wistful, exquisite and true,
Sweet to all sense as firstling buds o' the year,
As the lark's trilling in his aether sphere,—
Poems I would fashion, fragrant and fresh and few.

Or else would weave—if so, alas! it be
That here no more Simplicity may bloom—
Fabrics of Beauty on an ampler loom,
Many and great in subtile harmony,
Crimson and purple, fine with jewellery,
With golden fringe, with orient perfume.

XIX.

TO A REBEL PATRIOT.

Deem it not vain, nor weep for wasted toil :
Who, trusting, all his day serves Beauty's cause
Beauty eternal gains ere eve, and draws
Up from the deep heart of an arid soil
Delicious founts ; Labour all Ill doth foil,
And Faith will triumph over Nature's laws :
Think, if from work thy spirit ever pause,
That Rest at last soothed the Swans of Moyle.

And oh ! the Beauty to which thou dost strive—
The wind-blown, blood-flecked Flower of Liberty—
After long sickness shall at last revive,
Set in its natal soil amid the sea—
A plant full frail—frail Beauties nobliest thrive :
Power is made perfect in infirmity.

XX.

TO SAINT PAUL.

On the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost.

(*Ephesians* iv. and v.)

“ Redeem the Time, for evil are the days ! ”
(Thy voice was loud in Sanctity’s distress)
“ Put on the man of Truth’s high Holiness,
And circumspectly walk in Wisdom’s ways;
Nor seek the luxury of Wine or Praise,
Subject each one to one in Humbleness,
Knowing God’s Will within your hearts to bless
And canticles to speak and secret lays.”

Apostle ! Martyr-Bard of Love sublime !
Impetuous Convertite, that couldst indue
With Truth the soul of Gentile and of Jew !
Saint-Rebel, warring against regal Crime !
Thy voice we hear in evil days—but who,
Whence rising, cometh to redeem the Time ?

XXI.

TO A REBEL PATRIOT DEAD.

Impetuous One, grand as the mountain river
Rushing with tireless speed o'er chasm and rock !
Death who slays all doth break thy guarding lock,
And doth a battling spirit but deliver
From out his prison-cage whose frail bars shiver
Reeling to ruin from the precipitate shock
Of the wild inmate who doth rage and knock
With high-heard voice and straining wings a-
quiver . . .

No quiet sleep: though thy young mortal coil
Hath fallen dust to dust with all the great,
Thou shalt attain the haught Apostle's fate,
And the oblivion of Silence foil !
Ever shall Time thy call reverberate
And Life's long sea rock to thy far turmoil !

ENVOI.

Seeking, I onward strive, straight on, nor yet
Come to the place I sighted long ago;
Nor shall come, I do fear, until the glow
Of this impetuous Morning-tide be set
'Mid sober-tinted clouds of Calm, Regret,
Philosophy,—destined perchance to grow,
For all their shadow, unto Truth, and so
To Trust more sure that strongly *can* forget.

The Prelude thus of all my After-Play
These various notes, most wayward, hesitant,---
The groping of blind fingers that will stray
Over the stiff strange keys ere the bold chaunt
Breaks from the organ, sudden, resonant,
And men that murmured waiting, silent stay

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